



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Science Teaching Association Names 2021 Recipients of its Teacher Awards Program

Top Science Educators from Around the Country Honored in Celebration of Excellence

ARLINGTON, Va.—April 12, 2021—The [National Science Teaching Association](https://www.nsta.org/) (NSTA) announced the recipients of its 2021 NSTA Teacher Awards program, which honors K–12 teachers, principals, professors and other science education professionals for their outstanding work and achievement in science education. In lieu of the in-person event that typically takes place annually at the NSTA National Conference on Science Education, award winners are being formally recognized during various virtual award ceremonies scheduled during late May and early June.

“Congratulations to all of the award winners on their success,” said Elizabeth Allan, NSTA President. “Each one of these incredible educators has repeatedly gone above and beyond their role as a teacher to inspire their students and help them move towards a brighter future.”

NSTA is honoring the following award recipients:

NSTA Presidential Citation

- Moira Fathy Baker, Deputy Executive Director, National Science Teaching Association

Angela Award

- Sanika Datar, Science Student, Environmental and Adventure School, Kirkland, Washington

Corteva Excellence in Agricultural Science Education Award, *sponsored by Corteva Agriscience*

- Suzette Gagnon, STEM Coordinator, Christ the King Catholic School, Jacksonville, Florida

eCYBERMISSION Team Advisor National Recognition, *sponsored by the U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP)*

- *6th Grade Teacher Awardee:* Laura Wilbanks, Science Rocks U, Lubbock, Texas
- *7th Grade Teacher Awardee:* Milene de Farias, Southcrest Christian School, Lubbock, Texas
- *8th Grade Teacher Awardee:* Hima Lanka, Rocky Run Middle School, Chantilly, Virginia
- *9th Grade Teacher Awardee:* Ramu Ramachandran, Naperville North Parent Team, Lisle, Illinois

Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award for New Teachers

- Cara Storer, Science Teacher, Penn High School, Mishawaka, Indiana
- Leigha Sparrow, Science Teacher, Penn High School, Mishawaka, Indiana
- Jenniffer Stetler, STEAM Teacher, Chamblee Middle School, Tucker, Georgia

Northrop Grumman Excellence in Engineering Education Award, *sponsored by the Northrop Grumman Foundation*

- Sowmya Anjur, Science Faculty and Scientific Inquiry and Research Program Coordinator, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Aurora, Illinois

Robert E. Yager Foundation Excellence in Teaching Awards

- John Gensic, Teacher, STEM Academy Leader, Penn High School, Mishawaka, Indiana
- Heather Russell, K-5 STEAM Resource Teacher, Ecoff Elementary School, Midlothian, Virginia

Ron Mardigian Bio-Rad Explorer Award, *sponsored by Bio-Rad Laboratories*

- Katy Gazda, Teacher, Red Mountain High School, Mesa, Arizona

SeaWorld Environmental Educator of the Year Award, *sponsored by SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment*

- Martha McLeod, Science Teacher, Fulton Learning Center, Rockport, Texas

Shell Science Teaching Award, *sponsored by Shell*

- *Awardee:* Ritu Gandhi, Science Teacher, Morales Elementary School, Houston, Texas
- *Finalist:* Sergio de Alba, Science Teacher, R.M. Miano Elementary, Los Banos, California
- *Finalist:* Katy Gazda, Science Teacher, Red Mountain High School, Mesa, Arizona

Shell Science Lab Regional Challenge, *sponsored by Shell, outfitted by Carolina Biological Supply Company*

- *Grand Prize Winner (Elementary School Level):* Anne Marie Wotkyns, Science Teacher, Kittridge School for Advanced Studies, Van Nuys, California
- *Grand Prize Winner (Middle School Level):* Melissa Story, Science Teacher, Clark Shaw Magnet School, Mobile, Alabama
- *Grand Prize Winners (High School Level):* Tyler Dufrene and Cecelia Gillam, Science Teachers, Hahnville High School, Boutte, Louisiana

Shell Urban Science Educator Development Award, *sponsored by Shell*

- Shavonne Bragg, Elementary Science Teacher, Double Tree Elementary School, Memphis, Tennessee
- Alexander Eden, Biology Teacher, Greater Lowell Technical High School, Methuen, Massachusetts
- Michelle Ellis, Science Teacher, Hunter Huss High School, Gastonia, North Carolina
- Carla Marie Neely, Elementary Science Teacher, Cleveland, Ohio
- LaShan Rose, Science Teacher, Lindley Academy Charter School at Birney, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Cenia A. Santana, Science Teacher, Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York
- Tiffany Scott, Fifth Grade Science Teacher, Luling Elementary School, Luling, Louisiana
- Erica Stephens, Elementary STEM Teacher, John P. Freeman Optional School, Memphis, Tennessee

- John Carlo S. Tulinao, First Grade STEAM Teacher, Amberlea Elementary School, Phoenix, Arizona
- Leslie D. White, Middle and High School Science Specialist, Duval County Public Schools, Jacksonville, Florida
- Nakia Williams, Elementary Science Teacher, Lukeville Elementary School, Brusly, Louisiana

Sylvia Shugrue Award for Elementary School Teachers

- Jessica Ellzey, Science Teacher, Dawes Intermediate School, Mobile, Alabama

Vernier Software & Technology Awards, sponsored by Vernier Software & Technology

- *High School Level:* Jacob Bowman, Science Teacher, Western High School, Kokomo, Indiana
- *High School Level:* Joseph Muise, Science Teacher, St. Thomas More Collegiate, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada
- *High School Level:* Benton Shriver, Science Instructor, Canadian Valley Technology Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- *College Level:* Katrina Henry, Assistant Professor of Physics and Earth & Environmental Sciences, Virginia Wesleyan University, Virginia Beach, Virginia

NSTA encourages science educators to apply for its 2022 NSTA Teacher Awards. For information, visit <https://www.nsta.org/awards-and-recognition-program>.

About NSTA

Founded in 1944, the [National Science Teaching Association](#) (NSTA) is the largest organization in the world dedicated to promoting excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all. A vibrant community of 40,000 science educators and professionals, NSTA is committed to best practices in teaching science and its impact on student learning. NSTA offers high quality science resources and continuous learning so that science educators grow professionally and excel in their career. For new and experienced teachers alike, the NSTA community offers the opportunity to network with like-minded peers at the national level, connect with mentors and leading researchers, and learn from the best in the field.

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